

REMARKS

Claims pending in the instant application are numbered 1-20. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-11, 14, 15 and 17-19 are rejected. Claims 3, 4, 13, 16 and 20 are objected to.

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-11, 14, 15 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurtz, U.S. 5,455,445.

Claims 1, 14 and 18 have been amended to include allowable subject matter from claims 3, 16, and 20, respectively, as identified by the Examiner. It is the Applicant's understanding that the claim limitation "wherein the first layer comprises a polymer material" distinguishes the independent claims 1, 14 and 18 from reference Kurtz ('445). The Examiner is invited to phone the Applicant's representative named below regarding the instant application if the Examiner believes such a communication will more efficiently further prosecution.

Claims 2-13, 15-17, and 19-20 properly depend from allowable independent claims and thus are allowable. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the instant § 103 rejections.

New claims 21-22

New claims 21 and 22 depend from allowable independent claims, and thus are allowable.

Conclusion

The Applicant submits that in view of the remarks and amendments set forth herein, all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowance in this case.

Charge Deposit Account

Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fee(s) that may be due in this matter, and please credit the same deposit account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN

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